

R277. Education, Administration.

R277-705. Secondary School Completion and Diplomas.

R277-705-1. Definitions.

In addition to terms defined in Section 53A-1-602:

A. "Accredited" means evaluated and approved under the Standards for Accreditation of the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools or the accreditation standards of the Board, available from the Utah State Office of Education Accreditation Specialist.

B. "Board" means the Utah State Board of Education.

C. "Criterion-referenced test (CRT)" means a test to measure performance against a specific standard. The meaning of the scores is not tied to the performance of other students.

D. "Cut score" means the minimum score a student must attain for each subtest to pass the UBSCT.

E. "Demonstrated competence" means subject mastery as determined by school district standards and review. School district review may include such methods and documentation as: tests, interviews, peer evaluations, writing samples, reports or portfolios.

F. "Diploma" means an official document awarded by a public school district or high school consistent with state and district graduation requirements and the provisions of this rule.

G. "Individualized Education Program (IEP)" means a written statement for a student with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with the Utah Special Education Rules and Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

H. "Secondary school" means grades 7-12 in whatever kind of school the grade levels exist.

I. "Section 504 Plan" means a written statement of reasonable accommodations for a student with a qualifying disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

J. "Special purpose schools" means schools designated by regional accrediting agencies, such as Northwest. These schools typically serve a specific population such as students with disabilities, youth in custody, or schools with specific curricular emphasis. Their courses and curricula are designed to serve their specific populations and may be modified from traditional programs.

K. "Supplemental education provider" means a private school or educational service provider which may or may not be accredited, that provides courses or services similar to public school courses/classes.

L. "Transcript" means an official document or record(s)

generated by one or several schools which includes, at a minimum: the courses in which a secondary student was enrolled, grades and units of credit earned, UBSCT scores and dates of testing, citizenship and attendance records. The transcript is usually one part of the student's permanent or cumulative file which also may include birth certificate, immunization records and other information as determined by the school in possession of the record.

M. "Utah Performance Assessment System for Students (U-PASS)" means:

(1) systematic norm-referenced achievement testing of all students in grades 3, 5, 8, and 11 required by this part in all schools within each school district by means of tests designated by the Board;

(2) criterion-referenced achievement testing of students in all grade levels in basic skills courses;

(3) direct writing assessments in grades 6 and 9;

(4) beginning with the 2003-2004 school year, a tenth grade basic skills competency test as detailed in Section 53A-1-611; and

(5) beginning with the 2002-2003 school year, the use of student behavior indicators in assessing student performance.

N. "Unit of credit" means credit awarded for courses taken consistent with this rule or upon school district/school authorization or for mastery demonstrated by approved methods.

O. "Utah Alternative Assessment (UAA)" means an assessment instrument for students in special education with disabilities so severe they are not able to participate in the components of U-PASS even with testing accommodations or modifications. The UAA measures progress on instructional goals and objectives in the student's individual education program (IEP).

P. "Utah Basic Skills Competency Test (UBSCT)" means a test to be administered to Utah students beginning in the tenth grade to include at a minimum components on English, language arts, reading and mathematics. Utah students shall satisfy the requirements of the UBSCT in addition to state and district graduation requirements prior to receiving a high school diploma indicating a passing score on all UBSCT subtests.

Q. "UBSCT Advisory Committee" means a committee that is advisory to the Board with membership appointed by the Board, including appropriate representation of special populations from the following:

(1) parents;

(2) high school principal(s);

(3) high school teacher(s);

(4) district superintendent(s);

(5) Coalition of Minorities Advisory Committee;

- (6) Utah State Office of Education staff;
- (7) local school board(s);
- (8) higher education.

R277-705-2. Authority and Purpose.

A. This rule is authorized by Article X, Section 3 of the Utah Constitution, which places general control and supervision of the public schools under the Board; Section 53A-1-402(1)(b) and (c) which direct the Board to make rules regarding competency levels, graduation requirements, curriculum, and instruction requirements; Sections 53A-1-603 through 53A-1-611 which direct the Board to adopt rules for the conduct and administration of U-PASS; and Section 53A-1-401(3) which allows the Board to adopt rules in accordance with its responsibilities.

B. The purpose of this rule is to provide consistent definitions, provide alternative methods for students to earn and schools to award credit, to provide rules and procedures for the assessment of all students as required by law, and to provide for differentiated diplomas or certificates of completion consistent with state law.

R277-705-3. District Policy Explaining Credits Earned and Reciprocity for Credit for Demonstrated Competency.

A. All Utah schools or school districts shall have a written policy explaining the process and standards for acceptance and reciprocity of credits earned by students.

(1) Policies need not repeat the requirements of state law or this rule.

(2) Policies shall provide a review process at the school or school district level for credit for demonstrated competency.

(3) Policies shall provide a review process for credit earned for home schooling. This provision does not require schools/school districts to grant credit for home school courses or programs.

B. Units of credit shall be awarded to students and be recorded on student transcripts for satisfaction of district-approved courses or subject matter.

C. Students may earn credit by any of the following methods, as designated by the school district policy:

(1) successful completion, as determined by the school district or school, of secondary school courses;

(2) successful completion, as determined by the school district or school, of concurrent enrollment classes consistent with Section 53A-17a-120 and R277-713;

(3) demonstrated competency, as determined by the school district or school;

(4) assessment, as determined by the school district or school;

(5) review of student work or projects consistent with school district or school procedures and criteria; and

(6) following successful completion, as determined by the school district or school, of correspondence or electronic coursework offered by accredited education institutions with prior approval by the school district or school to the extent practicable and consistent with other provisions of this rule.

D. School districts or schools shall designate by written policy at least four methods or credit-earning processes in addition to traditional public school courses by which students of the district may earn credit.

E. Schools shall accept credits from accredited secondary schools, accredited special purpose schools and the Utah Electronic High School.

F. Schools shall accept credits from supplemental education providers and other credit sources with written approval from the student's principal or designee consistent with R277-705-3D prior to program enrollment.

G. Credits earned from supplemental education providers:

(1) shall be aligned with state Core Curriculum;

(2) shall have course content that matches Core course requirements; and

(3) shall have end of course tests that meet or exceed school district assessments.

H. Grades from supplemental education providers may be accepted, at the school/school district's discretion, as pass/fail grades.

I. Credits accepted consistent with R277-705-3E and F shall be recognized as original credit earned for specific courses, including Core courses. For instance, a tenth grade language arts course taken from an accredited provider, consistent with this rule and school district policy, shall count for tenth grade language arts for high school graduation.

J. School districts may not waive credits required for graduation, but may, consistent with this rule and documentation available to the district, grant credit based on demonstrated competency, assessment, or mastery.

K. School districts may require documentation of compliance with Section 53A-11-102 prior to reviewing student home school or competency work, testing, or materials.

L. A school district or school has the final decision-making authority for the awarding of credit consistent with state law, due process, and this rule.

R277-705-4. Diplomas and Certificates of Completion.

A. School districts or schools shall award diplomas and certificates of completion.

B. School districts or schools shall offer differentiated diplomas to secondary school students and adults to include:

(1) a high school diploma indicating on the diploma that a student successfully completed all state and district course requirements for graduation and passed all subtests of the UBSCT.

(2) a high school diploma indicating on the diploma that a student did not receive a passing score on all UBSCT subtests; the student shall have:

(a) met all state and district course requirements for graduation; and

(b) beginning with the graduating class of 2007, participated in UBSCT remediation consistent with school district or school policies and opportunities; and

(c) provided documentation of at least three attempts to take and pass all subtests of the UBSCT unless:

(i) the student took all subtests of the UBSCT offered while the student was enrolled in Utah schools; or

(ii) the student has been out of the secondary school system at least five years or more beginning June 1, 2006; or

(iii) a student's IEP team has determined that the student's participation in statewide assessment is through the UAA.

C. School districts or schools shall establish criteria for students to earn a certificate of completion that may be awarded to students who have completed their senior year, are exiting the school system, and have not met all state or district requirements for a diploma.

R277-705-5. Students with Disabilities.

A. A student with disabilities served by special education programs shall satisfy high school completion or graduation criteria, consistent with state and federal law and the student's IEP.

B. A student may be awarded a certificate of completion or a differentiated diploma, consistent with state and federal law and the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan.

R277-705-6. Utah Basic Skills Competency Testing Requirements and Procedures.

A. All Utah public school students shall participate in Utah Basic Skills Competency testing, unless alternate assessment is designated in accordance with federal law or regulations or state law.

B. Timeline:

(1) Beginning with students in the graduating class of 2006, UBSCT requirements shall apply.

(2) No student may take any subtest of the UBSCT before the tenth grade year.

(3) Tenth graders should first take the test in the second half of their tenth grade year.

(4) Exceptions may be made to this timeline with documentation of compelling circumstances and upon review by the school principal and USOE assessment staff.

C. UBSCT components, scoring and consequences:

(1) UBSCT consists of subtests in reading, writing and mathematics.

(2) Students who reach the established cut score for any subtest in any administration of the assessment have passed that subtest.

(3) Students shall pass all subtests to qualify for a high school diploma indicating a passing score on all UBSCT subtests unless they qualify under one of the exceptions of state law or this rule such as R277-705-6D.

(4) Students who do not reach the established cut score for any subtest shall have multiple additional opportunities to retake the subtest.

(5) Students who have not passed all subtests of the UBSCT by the end of their senior year may receive a diploma indicating that a student did not receive a passing score on all UBSCT subtests or a certificate of completion.

(6) The certificate of completion or diploma indicating that a student did not receive a passing score on all UBSCT subtests may be converted to a high school diploma indicating a passing score on all UBSCT subtests whenever the student completes all current state and district diploma requirements.

(7) Beginning in June 2006, an adult student enrolled in a Utah school district adult education program may receive an adult high school diploma indicating a passing score on all UBSCT subtests and by completing all state and district diploma requirements including provisions of this rule or may receive an adult high school diploma indicating that a student did not receive a passing score on all UBSCT subtests consistent with district and state requirements.

(8) Specific testing dates shall be calendared and published at least two years in advance by the Board.

D. Reciprocity and new seniors:

(1) Students who transfer from out of state to a Utah high school after the tenth grade year may be granted reciprocity for high school graduation exams taken and passed in other states or countries based on criteria set by the Board and applied by the local board.

(2) Students for whom reciprocity is not granted and students from other states or countries that do not have high school graduation exams shall be required to pass the UBSCT before receiving a high school diploma indicating a passing score on all UBSCT subtests if they enter the system before the final administration of the test in the student's senior year.

(3) The UBSCT Advisory Committee following review of applicable documentation shall recommend to the Board the type of diploma that a student entering a Utah high school in the student's senior year after the final administration of the UBSCT may receive.

E. Testing eligibility:

(1) Building principals shall certify that all students taking the test in any administration are qualified to be tested.

(2) Students are qualified if they:

(a) are enrolled in tenth grade, eleventh, or twelfth grade (or equivalent designation in adult education) in a Utah public school program; or

(b) are enrolled in a Utah private/parochial school (with documentation) and are least 15 years old or enrolled at the appropriate grade level; or

(c) are home schooled (with documentation required under Section 53A-11-102) and are at least 15 years old; and

(3) Students eligible for accommodations, assistive devices, or other special conditions during testing shall submit appropriate documentation at the test site.

F. Testing procedures:

(1) Three subtests make up the UBSCT: reading, writing, and mathematics. Each subtest may be given on a separate day.

(2) The same subtest shall be given to all students on the same day, as established by the Board.

(3) All sections of a subtest shall be completed in a single day.

(4) Subtests are not timed. Students shall be given the time necessary within the designated test day to attempt to answer every question on each section of the subtest.

(5) Makeup opportunities shall be provided to students for the UBSCT according to the following:

(a) Students shall be allowed to participate in makeup tests if they were not present for the entire UBSCT or subtest(s) of the UBSCT.

(b) School districts shall determine acceptable reasons for student makeup eligibility which may include absence due to illness, absence due to family emergency, or absence due to death of family member or close friend.

(c) School districts shall provide a makeup window not to

exceed five school days immediately following the last day of each administration of the UBSCT.

(d) School districts shall determine and notify parents in an appropriate and timely manner of dates, times, and sites of makeup opportunities for the UBSCT.

(6) Arrangements for extraordinary circumstances or exceptions to R277-705-5 shall be reviewed and decided by the UBSCT Advisory Committee on a case-by-case basis consistent with the purposes of this rule and enabling legislation.

R277-705-7. Security and Accountability.

A. Building principals shall be responsible to secure and return completed tests consistent with Utah State Office of Education timelines.

B. School district testing directors shall account for all materials used, unused and returned.

C. Results shall be returned to students and parents/guardians no later than eight weeks following the administration of each test.

D. Appeals for failure to pass the UBSCT due to extraordinary circumstances:

(1) If a student or parent has good reason to believe, including documentation, that a testing irregularity or inaccuracy in scoring prevented a student from passing the UBSCT, the student or parent may appeal to the local board within 60 days of receipt of the test results.

(2) The local board shall consider the appeal and render a decision in a timely manner.

(3) The parent or student may appeal the local board's decision through the UBSCT Advisory Committee, under rules adopted by the Board.

(4) Appeals under this section are limited to the criteria of R277-705-7D(1).

R277-705-8. Designation of Differentiated Diplomas and Certificates of Completion.

A. As provided under Section 53A-1-611(2)(d), districts or schools shall designate in express language at least the following types of diplomas or certificates:

(1) High School Diploma indicating a passing score on all UBSCT subtests.

(2) High School Diploma indicating that a student did not receive a passing score on all UBSCT subtests.

(3) Certificate of Completion.

B. The designation shall be made on the face of the diploma or certificate of completion provided to students.

R277-705-9. Student Rights and Responsibilities Related to Graduation, Transcripts and Receipt of Diplomas.

A. School districts shall supervise the granting of credit and awarding of diplomas, but may delegate the responsibility to schools within the district.

B. A school district or school may determine criteria for a student's participation in graduation activities, honors, and exercises, independent of a student's receipt of a diploma or certificate of completion.

C. Diplomas or certificates, credit or unofficial transcripts may not be withheld from students for nonpayment of school fees.

D. School districts or schools shall establish consistent timelines for all students for completion of graduation requirements. Timelines shall be consistent with state law and this rule.

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53A-1-402(1)(b)
53A-1-603 through 53A-1-611
53A-1-401(3)